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High School Dropouts Who Change Their Minds about School

by
ANDREW J. KOLSTAD
JEFFREY A. OWINGS
U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
Center for Statistics
Longitudinal Studies Branch

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to describe the following: (1) how many dropouts attempt to change the course of their lives by returning to complete their diploma requirements; (2) what kinds of dropouts return; and (3) how the subsequent activities of this group differ from those of dropouts who remained out of school. Those groups shown by previous research to be most likely to drop out were found to be least likely to return to their diploma requirements. The following factors characterized this high-risk group: (1) Black or Hispanic ethnicity; (2) below-average socioeconomic resources, (3) poorer test scores; (4) living in the West and Midwest (vs. the South and Northeast); and (5) living in rural or urban areas (vs. suburban areas). In general, male dropouts were more likely to return and finish high school than females (except among Whites, where they were equally likely). Among dropouts, those who completed diploma requirements were more likely to have done the following: (1) enrolled in postsecondary educational institutions; (2) enlisted in military service; or (3) obtained full-time employment. Dropping out is a reversible decision; this report concludes that there are good chances for success in working with dropouts to complete their schooling. The findings reported in this paper derive from the High School and Beyond project, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's Center for Statistics. Several tables with graphs are provided. (LHW)

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Objective. Previous studies have used national survey data to show how many high school students drop out before graduation, what kinds of students drop out, why they say they drop out, what social and economic characteristics are associated with dropping out, and how unsuccessful the dropouts have been in getting jobs. The evidence of these studies shows not only that dropouts experience a good deal of difficulty in finding good jobs, but also shows that many of the dropouts consider their decision to have been a mistake. Some of them take action to correct this mistake.

The objective of this study is to describe, using national survey data, how many dropouts attempt to change the course of their lives by returning to complete their diploma requirements, what kinds of dropouts return and complete their requirements, and how the subsequent activities of those dropouts who returned to complete the diploma requirements differ from those of dropouts who remained out of school.

Perspective. This section of the paper reviews two distinct perspectives on the acquisition of schooling by young people, deriving from research orientations called "educational attainment" and "human capital." This section then reviews the approaches of these two orientations to the problem of dropping out of high school and to the reasons for returning. It reviews the evidence on what kinds of students drop out, on the consequences of dropping out for later careers, and on the dropouts' own views of their decisions.

The orientation provided by the educational attainment literature emphasizes the role of ambition, or educational expec-

tations, in overcoming the limitations of socioeconomic background and academic ability on the level of schooling eventually attained by an individual (for an overview, see Bielby, 1981, or Campbell, 1983). The educational attainment approach directs attention to the social psychological processes that influence the career decisions of young people. Among these processes the most theoretical attention has been paid to that of social influence by significant others (parents, teachers, and peers) on the development of educational expectations and other attitudes and personality factors. The social-psychological approach of this orientation conceives of aspirations as part of the self-concept, and as developing though role models, the expectations held by others, and one's own expectations based on past performance.

The orientation provided by the human capital literature emphasizes the investment aspect of schooling decisions and considers schooling to be valuable because the skills imparted make the schooled individual more productive than the unschooled (for an overview, see Becker, 1964). The human capital approach directs attention to the economic life cycle, in which a rational individual continues to buy more schooling until the marginal cost of the additional investment equals the marginal return, and then the individual enters the labor market to obtain the return for which the investment was made.

The investment imagery of the human capital orientation provides no theoretical or independent role for aspirations, attitudes, or tastes for schooling. Based on a human capital orientation, subjective factors would be interpreted as

assessments of the anticipated costs and benefits of further schooling, but not as significant factors independent of school investment decisions. Unlike the educational attainment orientation, however, the human capital orientation does provide for a constraint on schooling investments. Given sufficient ability and resources, a student might leave school at some point to take advantage of better investment opportunities elsewhere.

Neither orientation is centered on the problem of dropping out of high school; instead, they focus in different ways on the relationship of school to work. Nevertheless, these orientations ought to be useful in understanding the behavior of dropping out as well as what happens when students change their minds and return to complete high school.

The educational attainment orientation would lead to an interpretation of dropping out of school at any point--high school, college, and even beyond college--as a failure of resources, motivation, encouragement, or the socialization process. Students who leave school, according to the educational attainment orientation, may return later, provided they had intended to go further when they left school (or that their aspirations increase), or provided that they are influenced by others with the goal of further schooling. Based on their background and ability, students who should not have dropped out are more likely to return than those whose action fit their resources and abilities.

The human capital approach looks for economic rationality behind the decision to leave high school; the decision should

depend on the balance between the expected wage premium attributable to the completion of high school and the expected opportunity cost of staying in school. The same reasoning applies to dropouts. Marcus (forthcoming), for example, argues that wage disadvantages often experienced by high school dropouts compared to high school graduates ought to bring about a return of dropouts to the educational system for further schooling.

The two orientations to the acquisition of schooling have been fruitful in generating empirical research, both in general terms and in terms of application to the problem of dropping out of high school. As applied generally to the process of schooling, the educational attainment literature has shown the importance of relatively unchanging social background and academic ability factors in constraining educational attainment, as well as the independent contribution of certain important attitudes and motivations on career decisions. For example, Sewell and Hauser (1975) have documented the importance of socioeconomic background; Marini (1980) has documented the importance of gender differences; Howell and Freese (1982) have examined the importance of racial and ethnic origins; and Rehberg and Rosenthal (1976) have examined the role of ability in educational attainment. From a theoretical point of view it is unfortunate that the survey data typically used to study the educational attainment process have not often included data that would permit a close look at the social psychological process of aspiration formation.

The research coming from the human capital orientation, like that of the educational attainment literature, demon-

strates the significant role played by family resources and ability in schooling. When researchers from the human capital orientation have used data to examine the problem of high school dropouts, they have found economic rationality behind the decision to leave high school (e.g., Freeman, 1978; Hill, 1979). Blakemore and Low (1984), for example, presented evidence that higher wages can can pull students out of high school, but that the higher wages initially earned by high school dropouts soon change into a wage disadvantage compared to high school graduates.

Government statistics based on longitudinal data provide additional information on dropping out of high school. For example, a study of dropouts by the National Center for Education Statistics, based on a follow-up survey two years later of the High School and Beyond sophomores, reported that Hispanics and blacks were more likely to drop out than whites, that males were more likely to drop out than females (except among Hispanic and Native American ethnic groups), that students from a family with fewer socioeconomic resources were more likely to drop out, that students with poorer grades were more likely to drop out, that students living in the South and West were more likely to drop out than those in the Midwest and Northeast, and that students in rural and urban areas were more likely to drop out than those in suburban areas (Peng, 1983).

Another study, based on longitudinal data sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, showed similar relationships between student characteristics and the rate of dropping out of high school (Rumberger, 1981). It also found that older students were

more likely to drop out than younger students, that Hispanics and blacks were more likely to drop out than whites, and that males were more likely to drop out than females (except among Hispanics).

Two previous studies have used national survey data and a multivariate statistical approach that adjusts for covariation among student characteristics to address the problem of dropping out of high school. In the first study, Rumberger (1981) found three categories of factors to be associated with dropping out: 1) family background (educational level of parents, economic resources, family size, housing conditions, and geographic location), 2) experiences in school (performance, relationships with teachers and classmates, and school climate), and 3) other non-school factors (ability and aspirations, early marriage and childbirth, and local employment conditions). The multivariate model showed that after adjusting for background differences in resources, minority men and women drop out at rates similar to majority men and women. Further, the greater the amount of reading material in the household, the lower the rate of dropping out; this relationship was stronger for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In the second study, Pallas (1984) described three somewhat different categories of factors, in addition to the standard socioeconomic background measures, as associated with dropping out of high school: 1) academic performance (grades and test scores), 2) social disability (delinquency, lack of relationships with teachers and classmates, anxiety, rebelliousness, and other personality traits), and 3) accelerated transitions to adult roles (full-time jobs, early marriage and childbirth).

Federally-funded longitudinal surveys have asked the dropouts directly why they left school. The dropouts' answers are to some extent self-serving in that they avoid failure as a reason. In general, young men give economic reasons (job offers, wanted to enter military, home responsibilities, and financial difficulties) more often than young women, young women give family reasons more often than young men (marriage and pregnancy), and both volunteer school-related reasons (do not like school, lack of ability, poor grades, expulsions or suspensions) and health reasons (illness or disability). (Peng, 1983; Rumberger, 1981).

Research has verified common opinions that dropouts have difficulties after leaving school. Dropouts experience higher unemployment rates and lower earnings than others (Rumberger, 1981), are more likely to require public assistance (Levin, 1972), and are more likely to engage in criminal behavior than more educated citizens (Erlich, 1975). While dropouts who become homemakers may not experience directly the effects of high unemployment and low earnings, compared to students, workers, and military enlistees, homemakers were the only group in a longitudinal study of high school graduates not to show gains in self-esteem after leaving high school (Malone, 1977).

Although a few careers do not require advanced schooling, and high school graduation is not compulsory, educational researchers and practitioners are fairly unanimous in deploring the decision to drop out. Many of the high school dropouts themselves thought it was not a good decision (53 percent, according to High School

and Beyond follow-up data on dropouts; Peng, 1983). While our society may need a certain minimum number of low-skill workers, individual students can generally improve their futures by remaining in high school to graduate.

Data Source. The findings reported in this paper derive from the High School and Beyond project (HS&B), sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's Center for Statistics (CS). HS&B is a longitudinal study that has tracked a national sample of high school sophomores for four years and will keep tracking this group for many years to come. Such a study is well suited to reporting what happens afterwards to students who drop out of high school.

The details of the HS&B project can be summarized briefly. In spring 1980, the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), under contract to CS, conducted an initial HS&B survey of 30,000 sophomores in 1,015 high schools. In spring 1982, NORC conducted a follow-up survey to which about 28,000 sophomores responded. Some members of the initial sample were dropped, but all sophomores who remained in the same high school, and about 50 percent of those sophomores who had left the schools they attended in 1980, including dropouts, transfers, and early graduates, were retained in the first follow-up sample. In fall 1982, NORC requested transcripts of HS&B students from the sampled high schools. About 16,000 sophomore transcripts were received and their contents systematically coded. Some members of the HS&B sample were dropped from the transcript study. In spring 1984, NORC conducted a second follow-up survey and about 15,000 sophomores responded. Cases of special policy interest

were retained in the sample with a greater likelihood than that of cases occurring more frequently in the population, but of lesser policy interest. Sample weights were designed to compensate for the unequal probabilities of participation in the HS&B project in order to obtain population estimates. Further information on sample design and survey content can be found in Jones, et al., (forthcoming); further details on the transcript data can be found in Jones, et al., (1983).

The present study is based on 1984 follow-up data from the former sophomores, obtained two years after most of them would have graduated from high school. The current data shows that many of the high school dropouts changed their minds about school, and returned to graduate or complete their general equivalency diploma (GED) requirements. (The questions asked on the survey forms linked diplomas and GEDs in the same questions, so it was not possible to distinguish the two modes of high school completion.)

The proportion of dropouts in the HS&B sophomore sample was 14 percent (Peng, 1983). This proportion is smaller than the proportion of non-graduates reported annually by the Center for Statistics, which collects administrative data that show the ratio of high school graduates to the 18-year old population to have remained constant at about 72 percent since 1978-1979. The ratio was slightly higher in earlier years--about 76 percent in 1970-71 (Gerald, 1984). If one considers all non-graduates to be dropouts, the dropout percentage based on administrative data would be 28 percent, much larger than the HS&B estimate. About

half the difference between the two estimates can be attributed to the shortened time at risk of dropping out in the HS&B data--the study began in the middle of tenth grade, so students who dropped out prior to that time are missing from both the numerator and the denominator of the HS&B dropout rate (for a discussion of sources of the remaining difference, see Verdugo and Pallas, forthcoming).

Techniques. This section first describes measurement procedures used to identify dropouts, to date their leaving school and to classify their later activities. Next, it describes the subsample of the HS&B data used as the basis of the findings and the weights used to compensate for unequal sample selection probabilities. This section then describes the tabulations and statistical graphics used to present the findings.

A possible source of difficulty in comparing dropout studies is the definition of dropouts and graduates. The present study defined dropping out among the sophomores as an event, not as a status--here dropping out means any prolonged absence from school. The absences were detected in the survey data in several ways. If students were no longer enrolled in 1982 at the time of the spring follow-up survey; were shown by transcripts collected in the fall not to have graduated in June or later; reported that they dropped out for a while before transferring to another school; were shown by transcripts collected in the fall to have been absent for at least a semester; or reported that they had not finished high school in 1984 at the time of the second follow-up survey, the students were identified as dropouts.

This study identified high school graduates on the basis of both self-reports and evidence from school transcripts. If students reported that they had received a GED or a high school diploma, in either the 1982 or the 1984 follow-up survey, or if their transcripts showed that they had graduated by 1982, they were classified as high school graduates.

Students who returned to high school after dropping out but had not yet graduated as of the 1984 follow-up survey were excluded from the group of dropouts classified as never having returned to high school. Since in most of the results reported below, the non-graduating returnees as a group were intermediate between those dropouts who later graduated and those who never returned to school, they are not shown in the summary results below. The figures on this group are available in the unpublished tabulations on which the present report is based (Owings and Kolstad, 1985).

For this study, the sample is restricted to those students who dropped out of high school. In the tables to be presented below, the sample size ranges from about 1951 to 2528 cases, depending on the number excluded because of missing data on a particular variable. All estimates in the tables were weighted using the second follow-up weight, FU2WT, in order to obtain population estimates. Percentage standard errors may be estimated using the unweighted sample sizes and a design effect factor of 1.65 to adjust for loss of efficiency due to sample clustering and stratification (for further details on sample design, see Jones and Spencer, 1985).

The data were analyzed in a series of cross-tabulations and bar graphs showing the percentage of dropouts who received a diploma or GED by 1984 among groups defined by various background factors. Cross-tabulations provide an advantage in describing the average experiences of dropouts and in allowing different relationships of background factors to dropout experiences within important groups of policy interest. The disadvantage of the descriptive approach lies in its inability to sort out factors which are directly related to later dropout experiences from factors that are incidentally related to later experiences. For example, racial and ethnic minorities look more different from the white majority in cross-tabulations than they would in a multivariate approach that adjusts for covariation between family resources, academic performance, and race/ethnicity. Later research using multivariate methods would be useful in understanding the experiences dropouts have after they leave school.

Results. The major finding of this study is that a substantial minority of dropouts in the High School and Beyond study returned and completed high school or obtained a general equivalency diploma (G.E.D.). Overall, four out of ten dropouts (38 percent) completed their diploma requirements by spring of 1984, a time when their classmates were two years out of high school. An additional one out of ten dropouts (13 percent) had returned to school but either failed to graduate or were still enrolled at that time.

The High School and Beyond study, because its design begins with and follows a class of tenth graders, does not represent all high school students. Table 1 and its associated bar graph show

that those students who dropped out early were less likely to return: 27 percent of those who dropped out as sophomores completed their graduation requirements, compared to 37 percent of junior-year dropouts and 41 percent of senior-year dropouts. The table and bar graph leave an empty place for figures on freshman-year dropouts to emphasize that no data are available on students who dropped out before the middle of their sophomore year. Students who dropped out prior to the spring of their sophomore year were not part of the HS&B study (as noted in the data source section above). While it is always unwise to extrapolate trends to a time with no data, it seems reasonable to assume that students who dropped out as freshmen or in the fall of their sophomore year would be less likely to return and graduate than those who dropped out in their junior or senior year of high school. A study design that tracked students through all of high school beginning at the start of ninth grade would be likely to find a high school completion rate among dropouts lower than the 38 percent figure found by the HS&B study. (An approximate guess for the full four years would be about 30 percent, or three in ten dropouts returning to school).

Since young women typically have different career patterns and expectations from men, most of the remaining tables present separate results for men and women. Table 1 shows that young men and young women who dropped out of high school later returned to complete high school at about the same rate, except that among those who left school in their senior year, men were about six percentage points more likely to complete their requirements than

women (44 percent compared to 38 percent).

Table 1 and most of the remaining tables also show, for reference purposes, the proportion of high school sophomores who dropped out. The proportion of young men who dropped out of school is larger than that of young women (15 percent compared to 13 percent). Since the percentage of dropouts in most categories has already been reported in previous publications (e.g., Peng, 1983), the percentage from different groups dropping out of high school will not be discussed in the text.

Table 2 and its associated bar graph show the racial/ethnic distribution of the return rates among dropouts. Hispanic and black dropouts were less likely to return and complete high school than were majority whites (30 and 33 percent compared to 41 percent). Among majority whites, young male and young female dropouts were about equally likely to return and complete high school, but among Hispanics and Blacks, young male dropouts were about 10 percentage points more likely to return and complete high school than young female dropouts.

One reason that racial/ethnic differences in dropout-return rates exist is that the racial ethnic groups differ greatly in socioeconomic status. Table 3 shows the racial/ethnic distribution within socioeconomic groups of the percent of dropouts who returned to complete high school. In the HS&B study, the measurement of socioeconomic status was based on student reports of parental education, occupation, and income and an index of eight household-possession items (see Jones, et al., forthcoming). The distribution of the index was broken into quartiles, and in Table 3 and its associated bar graph, the upper two quartiles were

combined. The table shows that in each socioeconomic quartile, blacks were less likely to return than majority whites. In the lowest quartile, Hispanics and majority white dropouts were equally likely to return and complete high school. Overall, the grouping by socioeconomic status did not eliminate the racial/ethnic differences.

Another factor on which racial/ethnic groups differ is academic test scores. Table 4 and its associated bar chart shows the racial/ethnic distribution within test score groups of the percent of dropouts who returned to complete high school. In the HS&B study, the combined academic test score is an average of reading, vocabulary, and math standardized scores on tests developed by the Educational Testing Service and administered in the sophomore year (see Jones, et al., forthcoming). The distribution of the average test scores was divided into quartiles, and in Table 4 and its associated bar graph, the upper two quartiles were combined. In this case the results are dramatically different. In the upper three test score quartiles, the Hispanic and black minority dropouts were more likely to return to complete their high school requirements than were majority white dropouts.

Previous studies of dropouts have shown geographical differences in high school dropout rates; the rates were higher in the South and West than in the Northeast and Central regions, and dropout rates were higher in urban than in suburban and rural areas.

The results in Table 5 and its associated bar graph show that among dropouts, the regional pattern of return and

completion rates is not the same as the regional pattern of the dropout rates. The South and the Northeast had return/completion rates around 40 percent, compared to a 35 percent rate in the West and the North Central regions. The return and completion rates among dropouts in the North Central region was unlike those of the Northeast and South in another respect: In the North Central region, young female dropouts were more likely to return to complete high school than young male dropouts (39 percent compared to 30 percent), while in the Northeast and South, the reverse was true. In the latter regions young male dropouts were more likely to return to complete high school than were young female dropouts (43 and 46 percent of men in the Northeast and South, compared to 36 and 35 percent of women).

The results in Table 6 and its associated bar graph show that among dropouts, the pattern of return and completion rates by type of community was similar to the pattern of the dropout rates by type of community in that suburban dropouts were more likely to return to school. High school dropouts in urban areas had dropout/return rates around 35 percent, compared to 37 percent in rural areas and to 42 percent in suburban areas. The pattern of return/completion rates is rather different for male and female dropouts in the different community types. In rural areas, young female dropouts are more likely to return to complete high school than young male dropouts (42 percent compared to 32 percent), while in urban areas, the reverse is true: young male dropouts are more likely to return to complete high school than young female dropouts (43 percent compared to 25 percent). In suburban areas, there was no sex difference (42 percent of

male dropouts returned and completed high school, compared to 42 percent of female dropouts).

Table 7 and its associated bar graph present the relationship between postsecondary educational plans, reported when the dropouts were still in high school as sophomores, and rates of return and completion of high school. Those who expected to go to college, but dropped out of high school, are more likely to return and complete high school than those dropouts who had no further educational plans for after high school (61 percent compared to 27 percent). Among those who had an intermediate level of educational expectations (junior college or vocational/technical school), male dropouts were more likely than female dropouts to return and complete school (51 percent compared to 44 percent for those who expected vocational technical training, and 64 percent compared to 46 percent for those who expected to attend junior college).

Table 8 and its associated bar graphs are different from the previous tables in that they examine what high school dropouts were doing four years after their sophomore year, by comparing the dropouts who later completed high school with those who dropped out but never returned. The HS&B 1984 follow-up survey found the dropouts and determined their activities as of February 1984. For this study, the categories of later activities were classified so as to be mutually exclusive, based on the hierarchical order shown in the table; for example, respondents in school were not considered to have jobs or to be unemployed. Because young women typically have different career patterns and

expectations from those of young men, this table presents the later activities separately for male and female dropouts.

The later activities of male dropouts differ depending upon whether or not they returned to complete high school. Male dropouts who returned and completed high school were more likely to have enlisted in military service, where they can obtain vocational training as well as avoid being unemployed, than those dropouts who stayed out of school (11 percent compared to 2 percent). Male dropouts who returned and completed high school were also more likely to have enrolled in a postsecondary educational institution, where they can invest in their future productivity, than those dropouts who stayed out of school (15 percent compared to 2 percent). On the other hand, male dropouts who returned and completed high school were less likely to be employed than those dropouts who stayed out of school (69 percent compared to 79 percent), and less likely to be looking for work (11 percent compared to 16 percent).

Although the nature of the activities typically pursued by young men and young women at this age differ substantially, the kind of later activities of female dropouts also differ depending upon whether or not they returned to complete high school. Like male dropouts, female dropouts who returned and completed high school were more likely to have enrolled in a postsecondary educational institution than those dropouts who stayed out of school (19 percent compared to 2 percent). Unlike male dropouts, female dropouts who returned and completed high school were more likely to be employed than those dropouts who stayed out of school (53 percent compared to 37 percent). Female dropouts who

returned and completed high school were less likely to be looking for work (11 percent compared to 16 percent). Female dropouts who returned and completed high school were much less likely to be a homemaker with no other activities than those dropouts who stayed out of school (19 percent compared to 41 percent).

Summary of Findings. Those groups shown by previous research to be most likely to drop out are also least likely to complete their diploma requirements. This study found that that Hispanics and black dropouts were less likely to finish high school than were majority white dropouts, that dropouts from a family with below average socioeconomic resources were less likely to finish high school than those from above average backgrounds, that dropouts with poorer test scores were less likely to finish than those with better test scores, and dropouts living in the West and Midwest were less likely to finish high school than those in the South and Northeast, and that students in rural and urban areas were less likely to finish high school than those in suburban areas.

Unlike previous studies of dropping out that found women somewhat less likely to dropout out of high school than men, this study found that in general, male dropouts were more likely to return and finish high school than female dropouts (except among whites, where they were equally likely). Perhaps this finding indicates that homemaking and childrearing reduce the alternatives for changing career choices.

The results of the fourth year follow-up survey indicate that completing high school is associated with more promising

futures. Among dropouts, those who completed their diploma requirements were more likely to be enrolled in postsecondary educational institutions, more likely to have enlisted in military service, more likely to be employed full time, and less likely to be unemployed and looking for work than non-completers (as of February 1984).

Importance of the Study. Studying the consequences of dropping out requires a long-term project, to observe both when students drop out and what they do afterwards. This paper reports new findings from a recent follow-up survey of high school sophomores, four years later. The results indicate that a substantial proportion of high school dropouts return to complete their diploma requirements. Dropping out is a reversible decision. Many programs exist at local levels that aim to bring dropouts up to a level of knowledge and competence such that they can graduate or receive a GED. The completion rates from this study indicate either that many of these programs are working or that dropouts change their minds on their own. There seem to be good chances for success in working with dropouts to complete their schooling.

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Table 1.--Later graduation of high school dropouts who were sophomores in 1980, by sex and year left school: spring 1984

Year left school	Total	Sex: Men	Sex: Women
	Percent who dropped out		
Total	13.6	14.6	12.6
	Percent of dropouts who graduated		
Total	38.1	39.7	36.0
Freshman	-	-	-
Sophomore	27.2	27.4	26.9
Junior	37.3	36.5	38.4
Senior	41.4	43.9	37.8
	Dropout sample size		
Total	1951	1049	902
Freshman	-	-	-
Sophomore	401	208	193
Junior	854	450	404
Senior	696	391	305

Note: The date a student left high school was based on high school transcript data. Students who dropped out as freshmen or in the first half of their sophomore year were excluded from the HS&B study.

SOURCE: High School and Beyond study (1982 transcript data and 1984 follow-up data), unpublished tabulations.

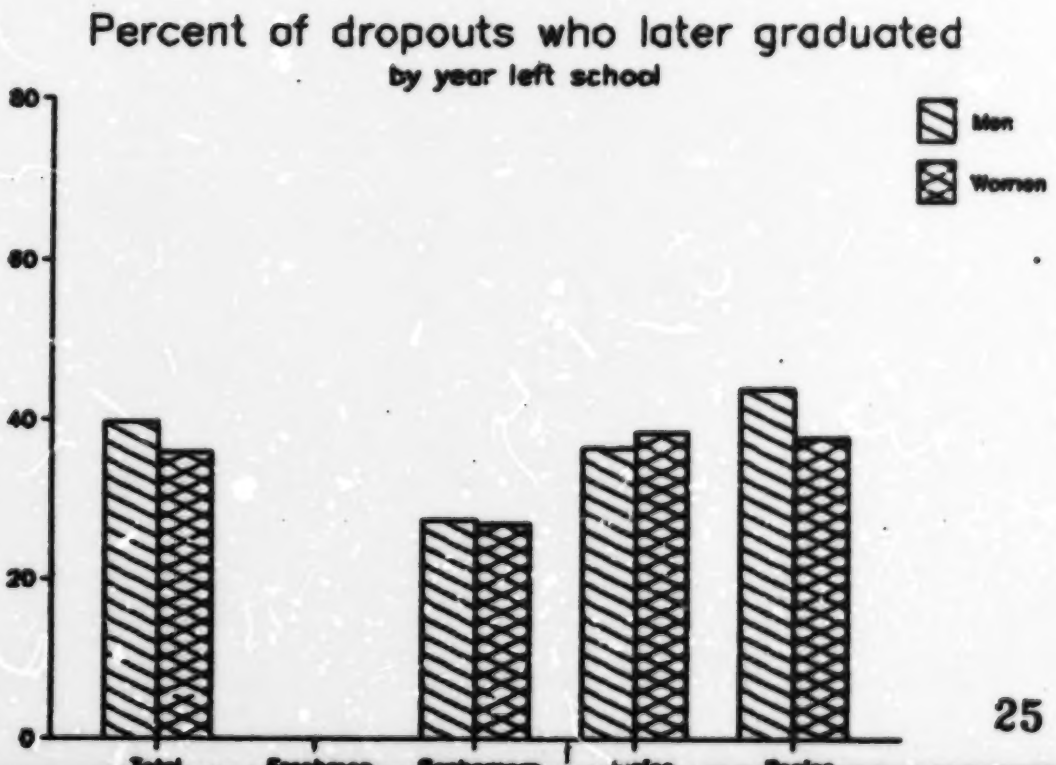

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Table 2.--Later graduation of high school dropouts who were sophomores in 1980, by sex and race/ethnicity: spring 1984

Race/ethnicity	Total	Sex: Men	Sex: Women
	Percent who dropped out		
Total	13.6	14.6	12.6
Hispanic	18.7	18.8	18.6
Black	15.8	20.1	13.8
White	12.2	13.0	11.5
	Percent of dropouts who graduated		
Total	38.1	39.7	36.0
Hispanic	30.3	34.1	25.7
Black	33.1	38.2	26.1
White	41.4	41.5	41.2
	Dropout sample size		
Total	2528	1327	1201
Hispanic	503	251	252
Black	461	262	199
White	1432	738	694

SOURCE: High School and Beyond study (1982 transcript data and 1984 follow-up data), unpublished tabulations.

Percent of dropouts who later graduated
by race/ethnicity and sex

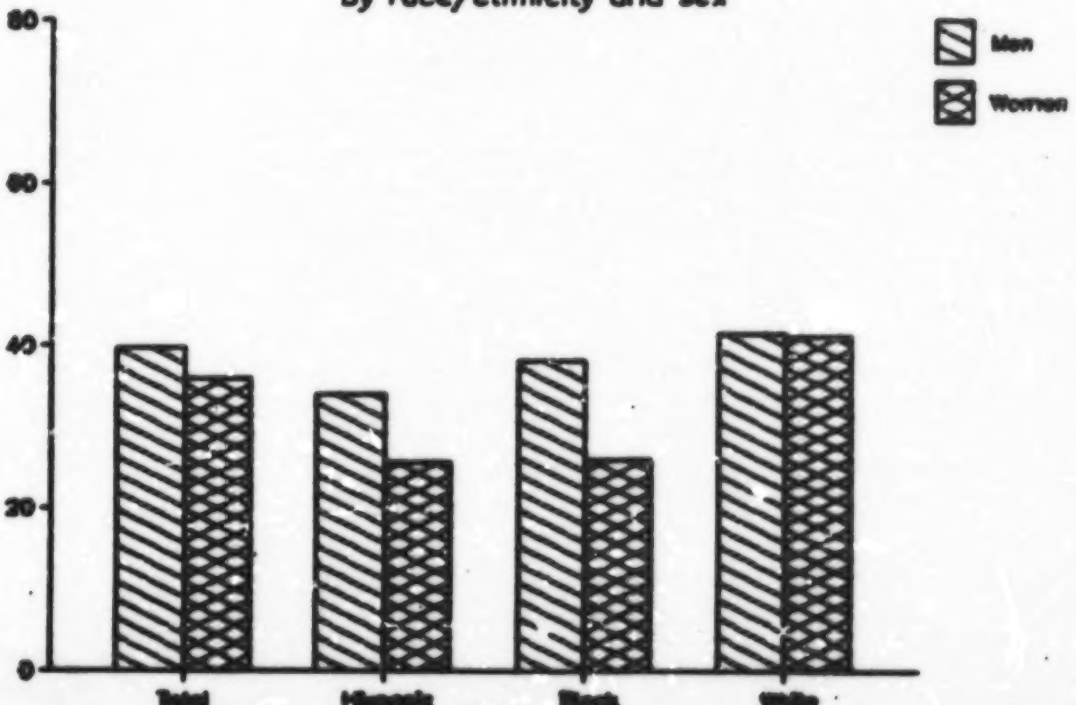

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Table 3.--Later graduation of high school dropouts who were sophomores in 1980, by socioeconomic status quartile and race/ethnicity: spring 1984

Race/ethnicity	Total	Socioeconomic status quartile		
		1 (low)	2	3+4(high)
	Percent who dropped out			
Total	14.4	22.3	13.?	8.9
Hispanic	19.1	23.1	19.5	11.0
Black	17.2	18.0	10.3	14.7
White	13.0	23.7	12.6	6.8
	Percent of dropouts who graduated			
Total	39.0	30.3	37.1	53.2
Hispanic	34.5	32.4	33.4	41.8
Black	31.8	24.9	33.7	44.1
White	42.4	31.9	39.5	56.3
	Dropout sample size			
Total	2169	943	576	650
Hispanic	427	241	99	87
Black	359	194	84	91
White	1285	482	364	439

Note: Socioeconomic status quartile is based on student reports of parental education, occupation, and income and an index of eight household-possession items (see Jones, et al., forthcoming). The upper two quartiles were combined.

SOURCE: High School and Beyond study (1982 transcript data and 1984 follow-up data), unpublished tabulations.

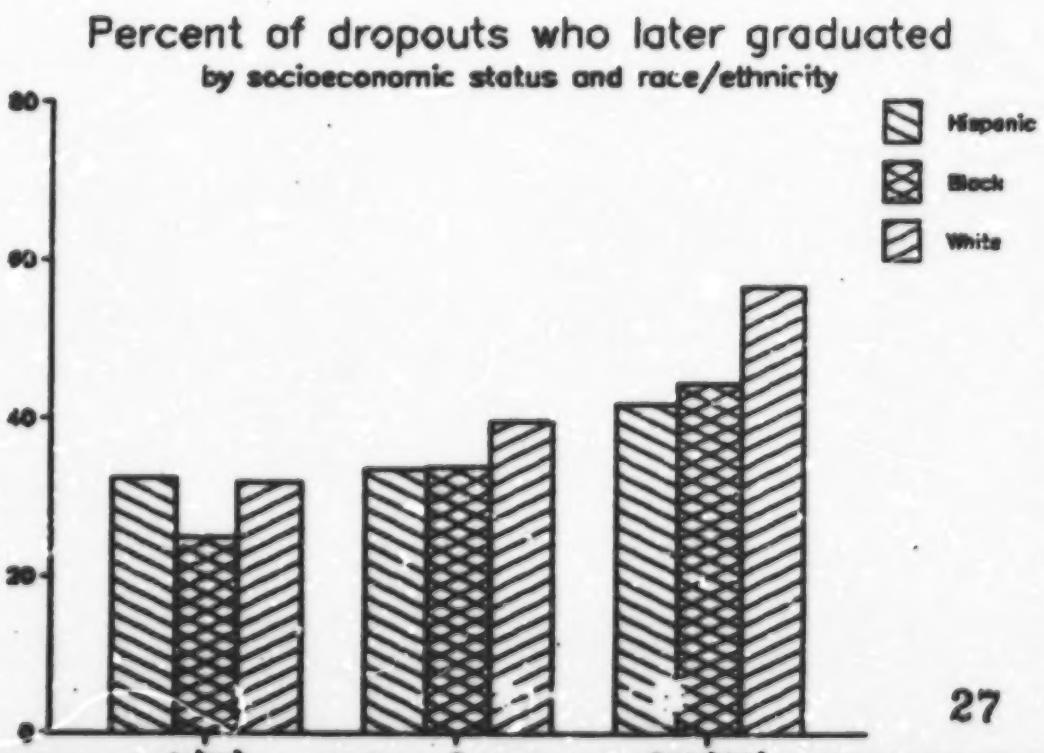

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Table 4.--Later graduation of high school dropouts who were sophomores in 1980, by test score quartile and race/ethnicity: spring 1984

Race/ethnicity	Total	Test score quartile		
		1 (low)	2	3-4(high)
		Percent who dropped out		
Total	14.4	26.5	14.7	9.0
Hispanic	19.1	25.0	11.2	8.7
Black	17.2	23.6	7.4	7.5
White	13.6	23.3	16.4	3.9
		Percent of dropouts who graduated		
Total	36.3	21.9	50.1	54.8
Hispanic	32.2	17.5	58.9	69.2
Black	33.1	25.3	54.9	58.1
White	40.2	22.3	49.7	54.5
		Dropout sample size		
Total	2327	1213	634	480
Hispanic	484	327	95	62
Black	449	336	67	46
White	1394	550	472	372

Note: Test score quartile is an average of reading, vocabulary, and math standardized scores or tests developed by the Educational Testing Service and administered in the sophomore year (see Jones, et al., forthcoming). The upper two quartiles were combined.

SOURCE: High School and Beyond study (1982 transcript data and 1984 follow-up data), unpublished tabulations.

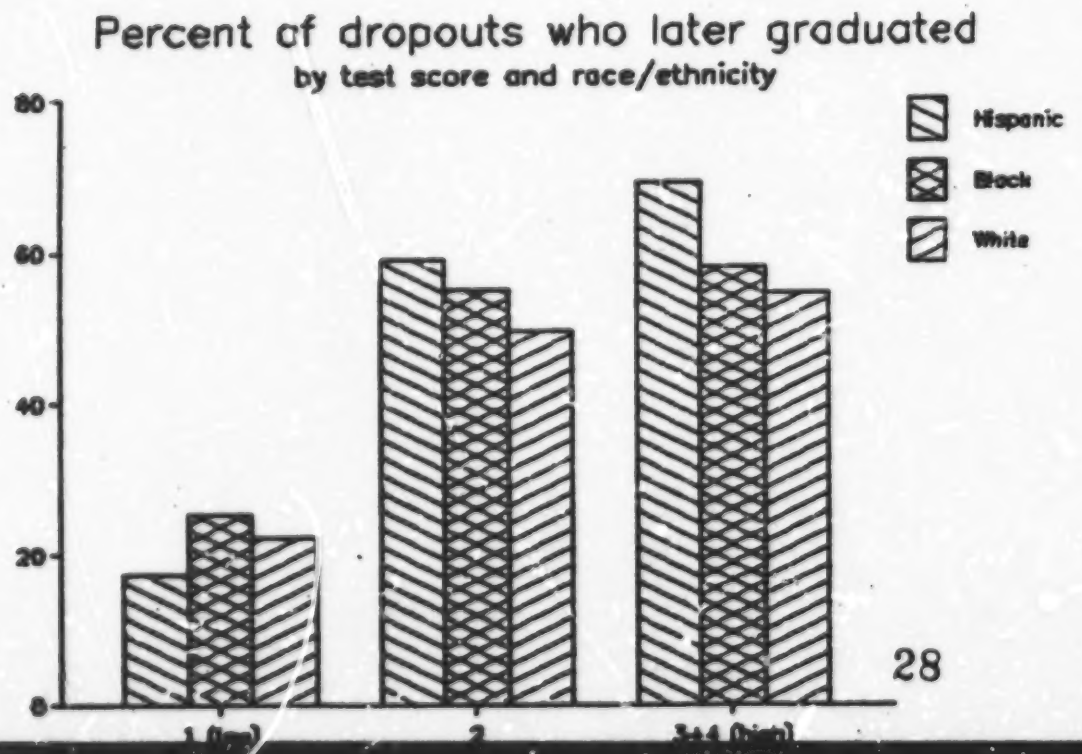

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Table 5.--Later graduation of high school dropouts who were sophomores in 1980, by region and sex: spring 1984

Region	Total	Sex	
		Men	Women
	Percent who dropped out		
Northeast	11.9	12.8	10.9
North Central	12.3	12.0	12.7
South	16.6	18.3	15.0
West	16.5	17.7	15.1
	Percent of dropouts who later graduated		
Northeast	40.3	43.1	36.0
North Central	34.2	30.0	39.2
South	40.6	45.5	35.1
West	35.7	37.2	34.0
	Dropout sample size		
Northeast	451	246	205
North Central	596	307	289
South	985	509	476
West	496	265	231

SOURCE: High School and Beyond study (1982 transcript data and 1984 follow-up data), unpublished tabulations.

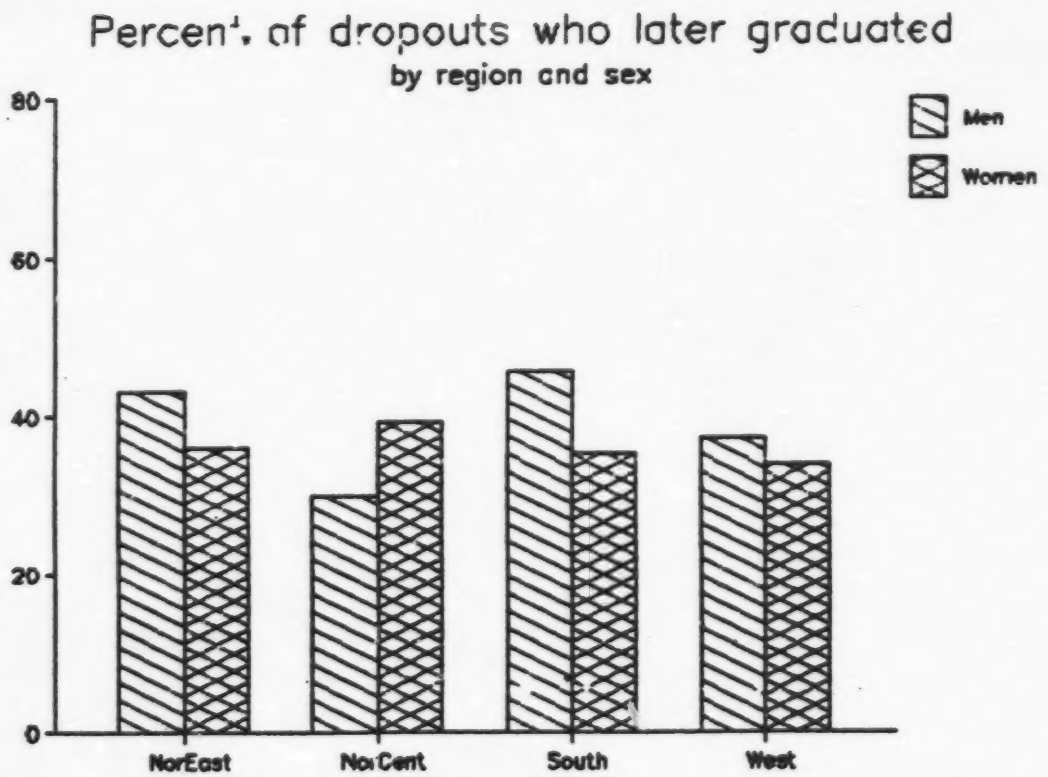

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Table 6.--Later graduation of high school dropouts who were sophomores in 1980, by urbanicity and sex: spring 1984

Urbanicity	Total	Sex: Men	Sex: Women
	Percent who dropped out		
Urban	18.1	19.0	17.2
Suburban	12.8	14.1	11.5
Rural	14.3	14.7	14.0
	Percent of dropouts who later graduated		
Urban	34.6	42.8	24.8
Suburban	41.7	42.0	41.3
Rural	36.8	32.4	42.2
	Dropout sample size		
Urban	787	418	369
Suburban	1021	538	483
Rural	720	371	349

SOURCE: High School and Beyond study (1982 transcript data and 1984 follow-up data), unpublished tabulations.

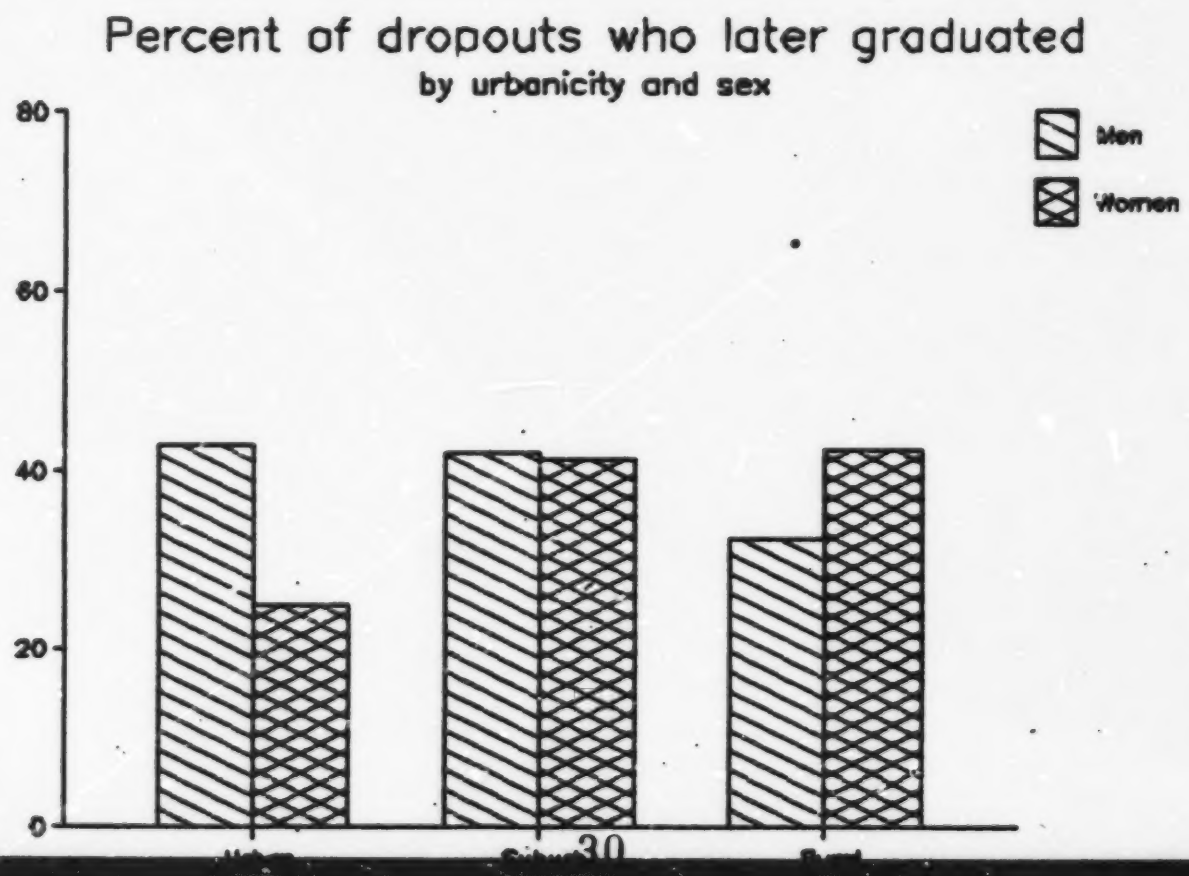

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Table 7.--Later graduation of high school dropouts who were sophomores in 1980, by postsecondary educational plans in 1980: spring 1984

Sex	Postsecondary educational plans			
	None	Voc/Tech	Jr Coll	Coll Grad
	Percent of dropouts who graduated			
Total	26.6	48.1	56.7	60.6
Male	26.4	51.2	63.5	60.1
Female	26.8	44.2	46.4	61.1
	Dropout sample size			
Total	1304	531	282	288
Male	685	292	138	139
Female	619	239	144	149

Note: Postsecondary educational plans were reported when the students were sophomores.

SOURCE: High School and Beyond study (1982 transcript data and 1984 follow-up data), unpublished tabulations.

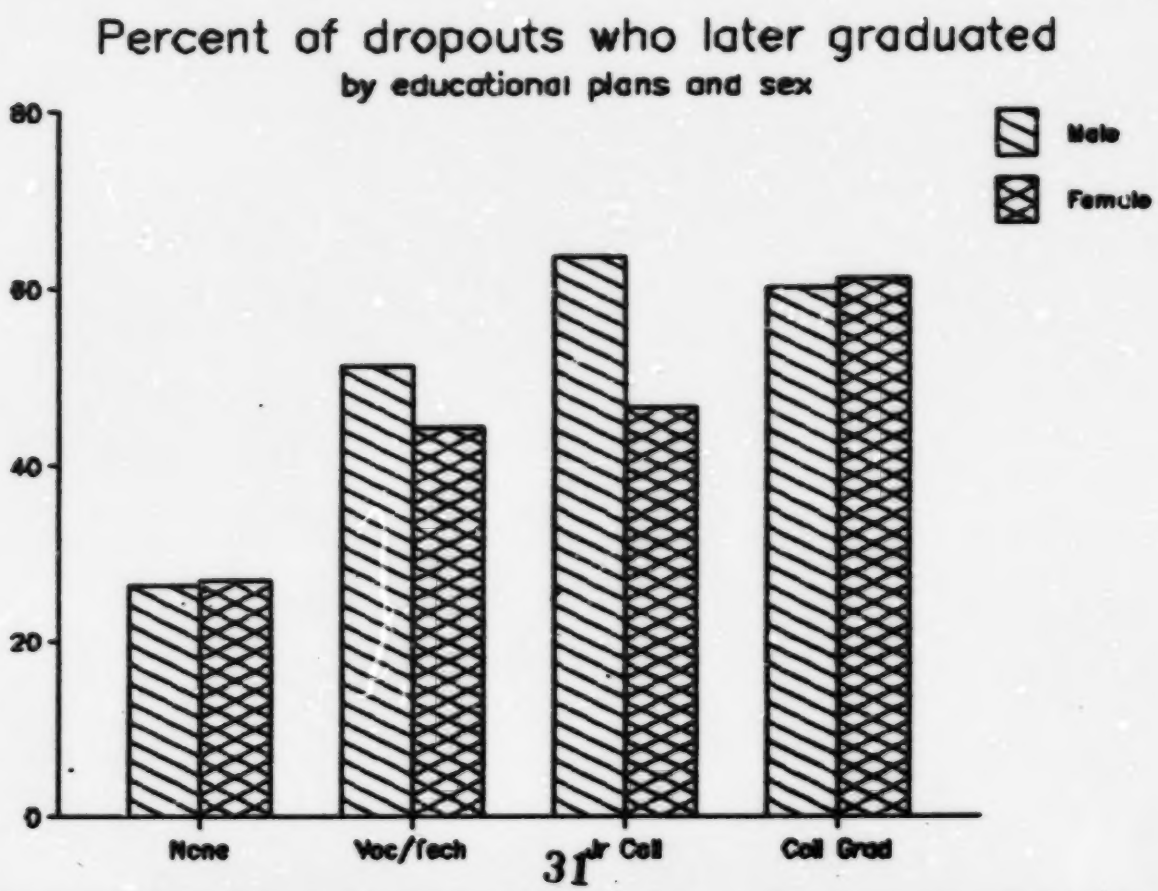

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Table 8.--Later activities of high school dropouts who were sophomores in 1980, by sex and graduation status: spring 1984

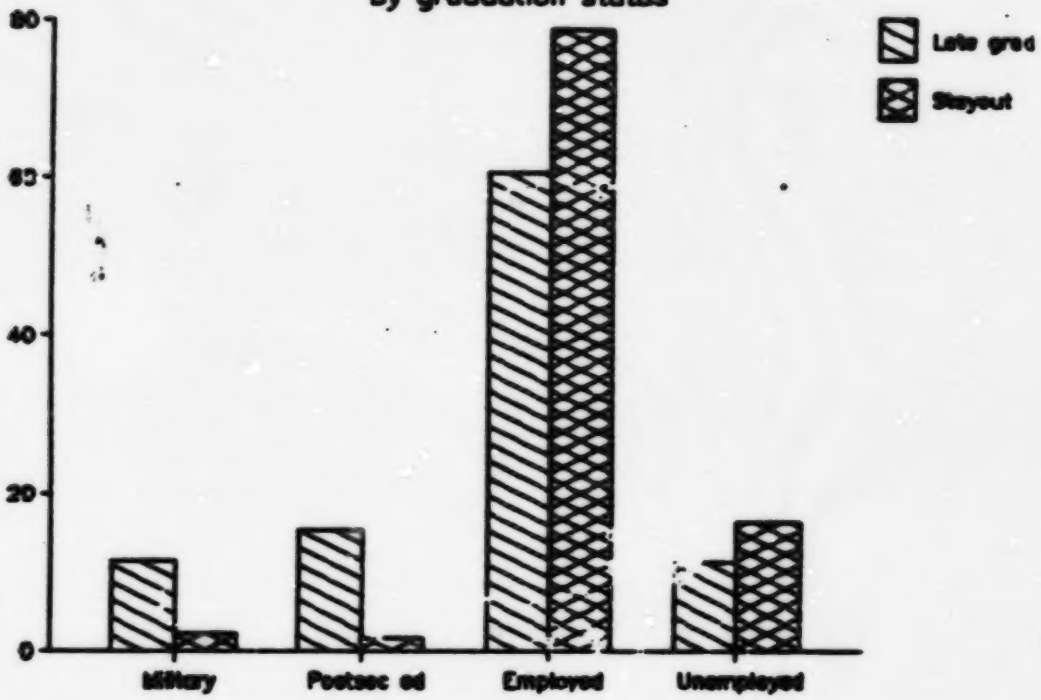
Later activities	Sex and graduation status					
	Male			Female		
	Total	Late grad	Stayout	Total	Late grad	Stayout
	Percent who engaged in activity					
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Military	6.4	11.4	2.3	.0	.0	.0
Postsec education	7.9	15.3	1.6	9.6	19.4	2.1
Civilian job	68.7	60.6	78.8	44.2	52.9	36.9
Prof, clerical	5.4	6.7	5.3	12.8	16.9	9.3
Craft	13.8	14.1	14.5	.7	1.0	.5
Operative	10.6	7.4	12.6	3.6	3.2	4.7
Laborer	18.5	13.7	23.3	2.0	.9	1.4
Sales	10.7	9.2	12.5	16.9	19.8	15.2
Other	9.8	9.5	10.7	8.3	11.2	5.9
Unemployed	15.9	11.3	16.2	16.1	9.2	20.1
Homemaker	1.2	1.4	1.1	30.0	18.5	40.9
	Dropout sample size					
Total	1251	491	641	1118	404	585

Notes: Categories of later activities are mutually exclusive and listed in a hierarchical order; for example, respondents in school were not considered to have jobs or to be unemployed. Activities were reported in spring 1984, four years after the sophomore year.

SOURCE: High School and Beyond study (1982 transcript data and 1984 follow-up data), unpublished tabulations.

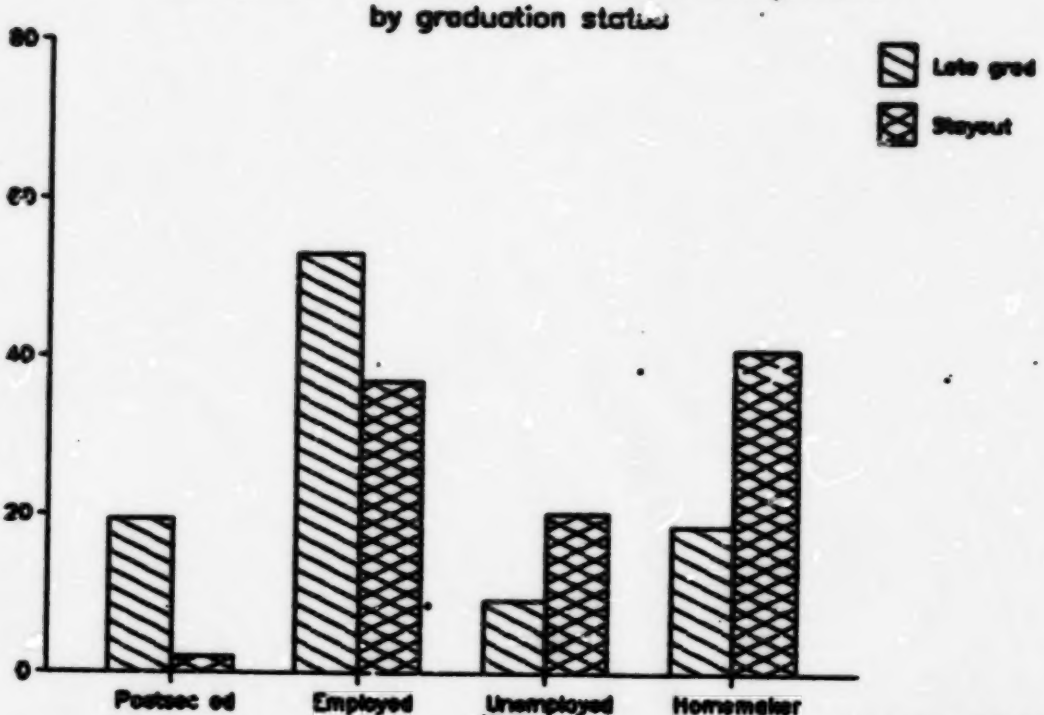
Later activities of male dropouts

by graduation status



Later activities of female dropouts

by graduation status



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